

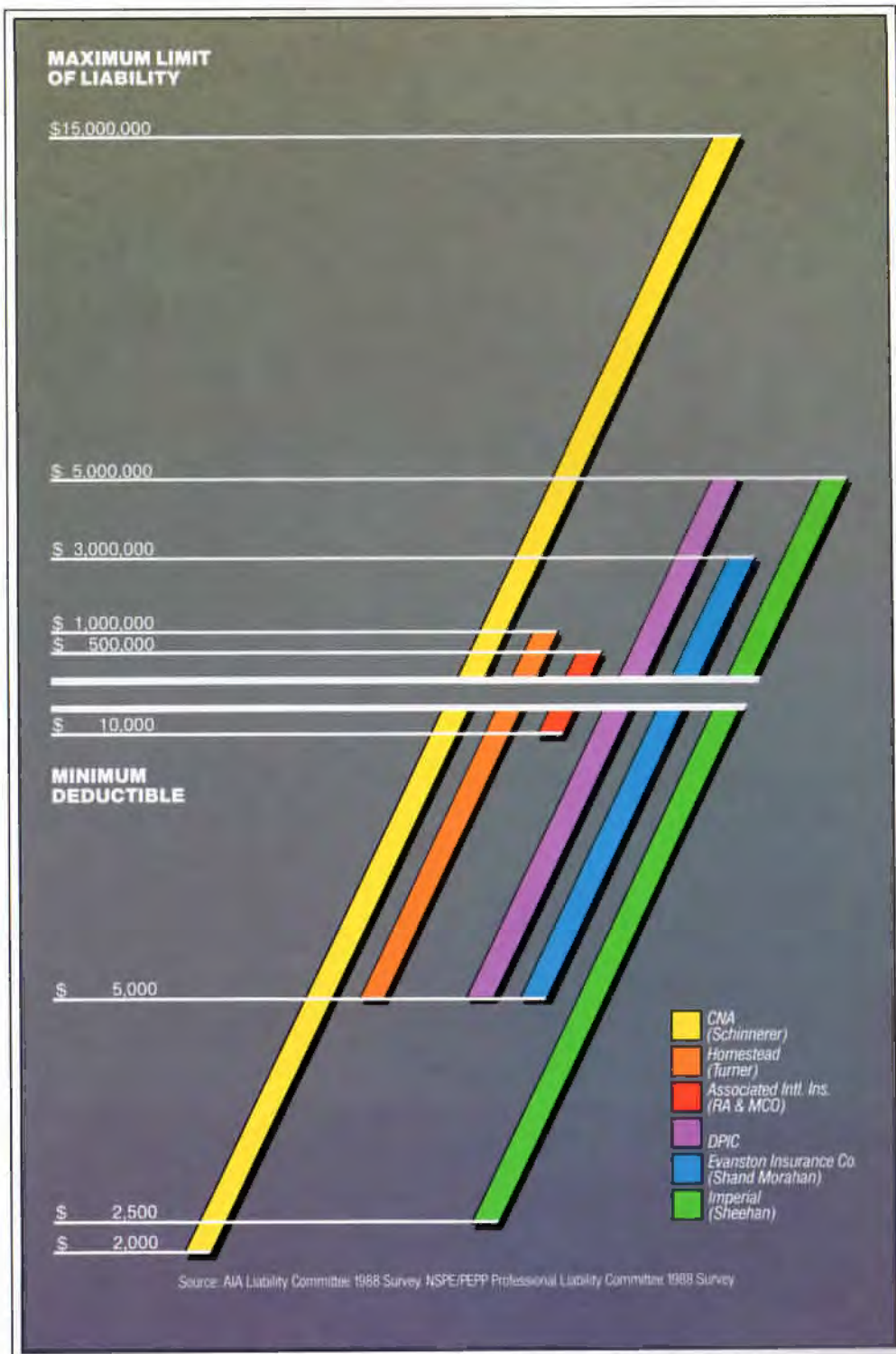
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36

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TEXANS used to hearing unpleasant economic news may not have noticed, but signs indicate that the downturn is over in Houston.

The very interesting reports issued by the Texas A&M University Real Estate Center showed Houston pulling ahead of the state average (even though the trend was downward) in 1987 and 1988 in house sales and commercial real estate. Last summer, the declines in these categories for Houston stopped and the numbers turned positive for the first time in half a decade.

In the most recent figures available, foreclosures in Houston had decreased 41 percent, while housing permits issued showed an 18-percent increase over the same period last year. The statewide residential-construction-permit average for the same period still reflected a 22-percent decline and the national average declined by just over five percent. Construction permits issued for office buildings increased nine percent in Houston, while the Texas average still showed a decrease of 36 percent and the national average was off by three percent from the previous year.

Of course, climbing nine percent of the way out of a deep hole still leaves a long way to go. The *Coldwell Banker Market Watch* reports that some 38 million square feet of office space remain vacant in Houston (out of a total of over 135 million square feet, which is more than two-and-a-half times the total space available in 1978). This is a grim figure, but it's an improvement compared to the 43 million square feet vacant at the bottom of the slide. Nevertheless, the office-space absorption rate for Houston, which had fallen to .3 million square feet per six months during the bust, has now climbed to 2.7 million square feet per six months. That is above the city's average of the last 16 years, although, at that rate, the city won't come into line with the nation's average vacancy rate until 1994.

These real estate figures reflect a broad-based strengthening in the Houston economy. Unemployment, which had risen to over 12 percent in 1986, now stands at 6.1 percent. Jobs are being added at the rate of 40,000 per year, meaning that employment levels could return to their pre-bust high by 1992. The area's population is growing at a rate of nearly 41,000 people per year, and some prognosticators predict that the average could rise to nearly 60,000 annually by the mid-1990s. The energy-dependent sector of the local economy has fallen to 66 percent, down from 82 percent in 1981. The petrochemical industry is planning some \$5.5 billion in expansions over the next decade, while the Texas Medical Center is planning to add \$1.5 billion in new construction and an estimated 50,000 jobs. The Port of Houston in 1988 became the nation's number one port in foreign tonnage, reflecting Houston's growing strength in international trade. And Compaq Computer, the start-up company that leads the Houston area's electronics-manufacturing sector, plans to double its size to 10,000 employees by 1992.

The demand for architectural services lags far behind the rest of the economy, as TSA's Houston-based members can testify. But things are picking up. Not long ago, I asked Houston architect William O. Neuhaus III how things were in his business. "It's started," he said. "Can't you feel it?"

The recession began in Houston and spread from there; now the recovery promises to do the same. Chances are that architects throughout Texas may begin quoting Bill Neuhaus over the next year.

—Joel Warren Barna

CORRECTION: *Carlos Jimenez of Houston, whose work was featured in the May/June 1989 issue, was incorrectly identified as an architect. He is not a registered architect in Texas.*

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Edited by Ray Don Tilley

Austin

New law redefines Texas architecture

During the waning hours of the recently completed regular session of the 71st Texas Legislature, the House of Representatives joined the Senate in passing Senate Bill 743, an architects' practice act. With signing June 15 by Gov. William P. Clements, the act will establish a new environment for the practice of architecture in the state when it goes into effect Jan. 1, 1990.

The new law, which was fostered through the legislative process by the Texas Society of Architects and its members statewide, empowers the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners for the first time to regulate architectural practice. Created in 1937, the board has been limited to regulating only the use of the title "architect." Says TBAE Executive Director Robert Norris, "This is our first opportunity to fully protect the public."

For the first time, the new law mandates that architects be involved in the design and construction of all private projects except single- or dual-family residences, multifamily residences up to 16 units or two stories tall, agricultural buildings, and buildings up to two stories tall or 20,000 square feet in size. Architects are also required for new public construction that costs more than \$100,000 and is designed for office, educational, or assembly use.

Beyond its importance for public safety, the act lends renewed significance to the architectural profession. In recent years, says John Only Greer, chairman of the TSA Registration Law Committee, architects had seen their traditional domain of expertise whittled away by engineers, interior designers, and building designers. The practice act claims no new ground but secures by law the work already generally considered to require an architect; in addition, it will not supersede more restrictive local building codes (already adopted by many Texas cities).

From among some 6,000 filed, several other bills favored by TSA and affecting architects or the practice of architecture were passed by the 71st Legislature:

SB 801, sponsored by Senator Bill Ratliff of Mt. Pleasant, allows an architect, for the first time under Texas law, to place a lien for nonpayment on a construction project for which the architect prepared the plans or specifications used.

SB 677, sponsored by Sen. Ike Harris of Dallas, requires state agencies and other political entities in Texas to use a clearly specified process for choosing architects on the basis of qualifications and experience, and to consider fees as a subsequent step. If an agency and architect cannot agree on fees, the agency will be free to negotiate with another firm chosen on the basis of qualifications, and so on until an agreement is reached. This bill ends earlier confusion and makes Texas law agree with federal procedure.

HB 650, sponsored by Rep. Bruce Gibson of Cleburne, sets up a state trust fund to permit acquisition, restoration, or preservation of eligible historic properties by authorized agencies or entities. Projects will be selected by a new state board appointed by the Governor.

The biennial appropriations bill was amended to include \$150 million from current funds for restoration and expansion of the State Capitol and the old General Land Office Building.

Among the other measures that did not survive the legislative process were:

HB 2709, sponsored by Rep. Bob Hunter of Taylor, which would have established statewide uniform construction codes, died in committee.

HB 83, sponsored by Rep. Ric Williamson of Weatherford, which would have allowed state agencies to use competitive bidding for architectural services, died in committee.

Passing a practice act has been a legislative goal for Texas architects since the passage of the original title act in 1937, says Greer. The last serious effort came in 1975, when a similar measure failed by six votes. After 12 years without the success seemingly promised by this near miss, architects in 1987 received an unexpected push toward pursuing the act again. Members of the state's engineers' board asserted publicly that local officials had to require an engineer's seal on architectural drawings for public projects, citing earlier legislative modifications to the state law governing engineers. The claim was later disavowed, but, spurred on by the misunderstanding, TSA officers and legislative counsel last August began drafting the bill that became SB 743. The first draft, explains Greer, included landscape architects and interior designers, with clearly defined professional

responsibilities. (Both groups intended to pursue legislation regulating their practices; both bills failed.)

As negotiations progressed with related professional groups before the bill's filing, says Greer, "we didn't get the intensity of purpose from the other two groups. Each of them also had special opposition that we did not have. . . . In the end, we agreed to disband and not to fight each other."

Negotiations with building designers, however, contributed significantly to the set of exemptions built into the bill. With designers' concerns addressed, Senate sponsor John Montford of Lubbock filed SB 743 on Feb. 28. The Senate passed the bill unanimously Mar. 30; the House followed on May 26, under the sponsorship of Rep. Stan Schlueter of Killeen.

—Ray Don Tilley

CRSS to close White House office

CRSS, the Houston-based architectural, engineering, and construction giant, is planning to vacate the well-known low-rise office building occupied by its architecture and other divisions since 1970. The "White House," as the building is called, was designed by a team headed by the late William Caudill, FAIA, co-founder in 1946 of Caudill and Rowlett, later Caudill, Rowlett and Scott (winner of the AIA's Firm of the Year award in 1972), and eventually CRSS.

In the energy-conscious, antimonumental style typical of the firm, the concrete-and-glass office was built below the grade of the adjacent freeway access road; its roof-level "parking tray" was broken only by a white stair tower with a strongly cantilevered automobile canopy. In the office areas below, windows opened on four sides to views of the sloping eight-acre site. From the start, entry-level employees worked with executives in open-plan offices, in keeping with the firm's team-based approach. The building was published in *Progressive Architecture* in 1970 and *Interiors* in 1972.



The Caudill-led design for the White House emphasized transparency between indoor and outdoor spaces. ABOVE, and an antiheroic entry, RIGHT.



Yet, approval was not universal. Some former employees complained about the dank conditions created by the shadow of the parking deck; some said that window placement made the famous views unavailable to people at their desks. But others have tried to organize a letter-writing campaign to block the move and what they see as the certain destruction of a Houston landmark.

Glenn Hobratchsk, Senior Vice President and Corporate Controller for CRSS, says that the White House will be vacated over the next year to save money. "The [White House's] operating costs are very high," says Hobratchsk. The move, he adds, will consolidate the firm's employees, adding a



floor to the seven occupied in an adjacent office tower, designed by CRS and built in 1978. The Dallas office of CRSS is redesigning the tower offices.

And will the White House be razed? "That's one of the options we are looking at," says Hobratchsk.

—Joel Warren Barna

Fort Worth/Houston

Acclaimed museums to see additions

Art museums in Fort Worth and Houston are planning or actively pursuing major expansions.

According to its director, Edmund Pillsbury, the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, designed by Louis I. Kahn and widely deemed the best building in Texas, is no longer big enough for the institution's growing collection (which also ranks among the nation's finest). Pillsbury says that Romaldo Giurgola, FAIA, of Mitchell/Giurgola Architects, New York, has been hired by the museum to study "what space we will need for the future." Public comment will be sought early, before any building plans are considered, Pillsbury says. Kimbell officials want to avoid the kind of public outcry that greeted plans for recent additions to the Guggenheim and Whitney museums in New York.

Additional space is also needed at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, officials say. The museum's collection and attendance have doubled over the last decade, placing it among the top 10 percent nation-

ally in attendance, but in the lower 40th percentile in gallery space. In addition to its main building, composed of a 1924 structure by William Ward Watkin and additions designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the museum currently occupies the Cullen Sculpture Garden (designed by Isamu Noguchi) and the Glassell School of Art (designed by Morris/Aubry Architects). Additional property that has been acquired includes a parking lot two blocks north on Main Street, the former Butera's Delicatessen and an empty lot on Montrose Boulevard opposite the Glassell School, and two whole blocks east of the museum's main building on Binz Street.

Over the next 10 years, a \$50-million building campaign is planned. The biggest item will be a new gallery on Binz, adjacent to the main building; other projects include a new building for a conservation laboratory and support services on Montrose and a plan for unifying the sprawling campus with street furniture, graphics, and other devices.

"That's \$50 million in today's money," says MFA Director Peter Marzio, who adds that he wants to raise half the money in endowment funds before breaking ground.



Although still in their early stages of conception, additions are planned for the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth. TOP, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. ABOVE.

NEWS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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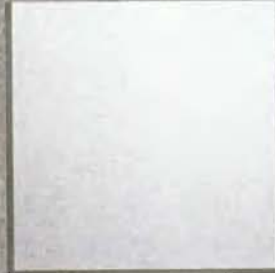
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Planning, design, and construction will take up to five years, he says.

The *Houston Chronicle* reported in May that Cesar Pelli Associates had been hired to do the master plan for museum expansion. Not so, Marzio says: Pelli is among those being interviewed, but a decision will likely not be made until late July. Marzio hinted during a symposium on museum design sponsored by the MFA in 1988 (see "News," May/June 1988) that participants Arata Isozaki, Hans Hollein, Charles Moore, FAIA, and others were being considered for the architectural commissions to be awarded. But Marzio says that no written short-list for the projects exists, and no interviews of architects are in the works.

While officials in Houston and Fort Worth want to avoid saying too much, too early, these projects promise major changes to two of the state's most significant cultural resources.

—JWB

NEWS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

OF NOTE



An Austin-based joint venture of **Milosav Cekic Architects** and **Landcorp-Ehrler Inc.** won first prize in the national competition for the **Richard and Annette Bloch Cancer Survivors' Park** in Kansas City (above). A triumphal arch with an eternal flame is the central piece, symbolizing the passage from one level of consciousness to another in the course of the disease.

In May, the San Antonio City Council hired a design team for the new "Alamodome" that includes local firms **Marmon Barclay Souter Foster Hays**, **W. E. Simpson Co.**, **Andrew Perez Associates**, and **Haywood Jordan McCowan**, and Hellmuth Obata & Kassabaum's St. Louis office.

Also in San Antonio, voters approved a \$46-million library bond package that paves the way for work on a new downtown main library.

Paul Kennon, FAIA, president and design principal of the Houston-based firm **CRSS Inc.**, has been appointed dean of the Rice University School of Architecture. Kennon will retain his position with CRSS.

"In a post-industrial or mature society, people will shop for experiences instead of products." —**Dallas Architect James Pratt, FAIA**, from *Urban Design International* (Fall 1988), describing a planning charrette for Teller County, Colo.

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Bass unveils downtown housing plan

Financier Edward P. Bass, as CEO of Fine Line, Inc., announced plans Apr. 12 to begin construction in September on a 25-million-dollar, 12-story housing and mixed-use project to be called Sundance West; the first of three apartment, loft, and condominium structures that could bring as many as 245 new housing units to the Bass-owned Sundance Square area.

Sundance West will be a departure from historical precedent. With the exceptions of the 280-unit Ripley Arnold public-housing project and two high-rise housing blocks for the elderly, residential development in downtown Fort Worth has been unable to support the activity that defines a robust inner city. Urban studies since the Gruen Plan in the 1950s have gone so far as to include pro formas for such projects in the effort to bolster the idea of living downtown.

The Bass family of Fort Worth now intends to ameliorate this shortcoming, adding to what are already substantial contributions to the revitalization of downtown, including City Center Towers I and II, the



Sundance West will add 245 downtown housing units.

Worthington Hotel, the Sundance Square retail and office blocks, and the Caravan of Dreams performing arts center.

Sundance West will be located immediately adjacent to the Caravan of Dreams and Ed Bass's downtown apartment. It will include 15,000 square feet of street-level retail; a 2,200-seat, eight-theater cinema complex that will allude to the grand theaters of Fort Worth's past; and 75 one- to three-bedroom luxury apartments with 700 to 1700 square feet per unit.

Instrumental to the decision to proceed with the long-discussed project was ap-

proval by city, county, and school authorities of a 13-year tax abatement, after which the three entities expect to receive an estimated \$1.6 million in tax revenues for the first year, more than compensating for the approximately \$400,000 given in tax breaks. Mayor Bob Bolen describes the "public-private partnership" as a "breakthrough" and "a key in Fort Worth's continued redevelopment of downtown."

The brick-and-stone building was designed by David M. Schwarz Architectural Services, P.C., of Washington, D.C., in association with HDR, Inc., of Dallas. Rents will range from \$700 to \$1700 per month—at the high end of the market, but directed toward, as Bass described them, "upscale, adventurous citizens . . . best accommodated by a quality downtown setting." Full occupancy is expected by the spring of 1992.

—Mark Gunderson

Mark Gunderson is principal of the Fort Worth firm W. Mark Gunderson, Architect.



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Power offices, Power House winners

In an Apr. 29 chapter design-awards competition that drew 95 entries, a residence



Honor Award winners: Administration Center for Alcon Laboratories, Fort Worth, ABOVE, by Mark Dilworth/Omniplan, Inc.; and Power House (residence), Dallas, RIGHT, by Cunningham Architects.



in Dallas by Cunningham Architects and an administration center for Alcon Laboratories in Fort Worth designed by Mark Dilworth/Omniplan, Inc., emerged as the 1989 Honor Award winners. Two more projects by Omniplan architects survived a 10-hour jury process that produced 13 awards.

The jurors were Jan Keane of Mitchell/Giurgola Architects, New York; Ronald Mason of Anderson Mason Dale Architects, Denver; and Charles Tapley, FAIA, of Tapley/Lunow Architects, Houston. All were impressed immediately by both Honor Award winners. They seized on the "superbly detailed great wall of glass" that created for the Alcon Laboratories' administration center "a rich and elegant presence." The transparency of its lobby, they said, extends a ground-level court to the surrounding landscape.

The jurors praised the residence called "Power House" for its "constructivist, nuts-and-bolts aesthetic," drawn from its original use as an electrical substation and adapted for all new design in the house. Keane called the house "a rare project [in that] toughness is made to feel somehow comfortable."

Honor Awards: R. D. Alexander Administration Center for Alcon Laboratories, Fort

Merit Awards: 501 Elm Place, BELOW; Trinity Easter Seal Society for Children, RIGHT; Citation Award: Montserrat Retreat House, FAR RIGHT

Robert Miller



Douglas Rubin



Merit Award: Riario Hair Salon

James F. Wilson



Merit Award: Designtex Showroom

Worth, by Mark Dilworth/Omniplan, Inc.; and *Power House* (private residence), Dallas, by Cunningham Architects.

Merit Awards: *Designtex Showroom*, Dallas, by Hermanovski Lauck Design; *501 Elm Place*, Dallas, by Corgan Associates; *Riario Hair Salon*, Houston, by CRSS, Inc.; and *Trinity Easter Seal Society for Children* (therapy center), Dallas, by Bernard Johnson/Taylor/Hewlett, Inc.

Citation Awards: *All Saints Hospital - Cityview*, Fort Worth, by HKS Inc.; *Barton Creek Clubhouse*, Austin, by Frank Welch & Associates, Inc., and HKS, Inc.; *The Horchow Collection*, Dallas, by Hermanovski Lauck Design; *Montserrat Retreat House*, Lake Dallas, by Woo James Harwick Peck Architects; *Robert and Marjorie Myers Residence*, Dallas, by Max Levy Architect; *The Parks at Arlington* by Steven J. Winslow/Omniplan, Inc.; and *Travis Street Condominiums*, Dallas, by Lionel Morrison/Omniplan, Inc.

—RDT

NEWS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

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Texas State Capitol Building by Elijah E. Myers

1881-82

Watercolor. 41x64 inches.

Courtesy State Preservation Board.

This rendering of the Capitol probably arrived in Austin in early 1882 from Capitol architect Myers's office in Detroit. The March 8, 1882, *Austin Daily Statesman* noted that this "perspective of the new capitol" was on public display in the office of the Capitol commissioners. A headline in the same

newspaper on November 4, 1908, reported that Myers's original drawing was "in bad shape," and went on to account for its condition: "In a rear room on the fourth floor of the state house is the original drawing of the capitol building made by the architect, E. E. Myers of Detroit, Mich. Up to a few years ago this drawing was kept in the reception room of the governor on the second floor and was given attention, but now the drawing, which should be highly praised as an historical relic, is in a bad state of

preservation and is being slowly eaten by cockroaches and other insects. A well known citizen yesterday suggested that it should be framed and placed in the state library where it can be given proper attention." Apparently this was not the case since the December 19, 1926, *Daily Statesman* noted that Miss Minerva Brown, an employee in the state highway department, found the misplaced drawing in a state building. The rendering was then placed in the office of the board of control. It has been conserved

several times since the 1920s and underwent additional conservation and restoration in 1988.

This rendering was most recently featured in the March/April 1989 issue of *Texas Architect* and on the cover of the October 1988 issue (Vol. XCII, No. 2) of the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, published by the Texas State Historical Association, which celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Texas Capitol. Text reprinted with permission from the Texas State Historical Association.

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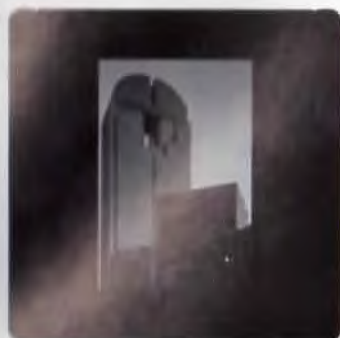
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Sand sand sand sand sand sand sand

They keep coming back for more—more sun, surf, and sand—lots more sand. Houston architects came back for the third annual Houston AIA/Steelcase Sand Castle Competition, raising the beach on Galveston's east end to new figurative heights.

Twenty-nine teams comprising 450 participants shoveled, sprayed, patted, tamped, and scooped for four hours June 3 while a crowd of thousands strolled by and watched. The usual discomforts of the beach were aggravated by the incessant bump-bump-bump "music" blasted miles across the tidal marshes by porta-can-sized speakers trucked in by a local radio station.

A noticeable difference in this year's sand designs seems to signal a change in approach. Previous years' entries contained tall castles, pyramids, and other vertical architectural forms that required formwork and time-consuming layering and compacting. This year, only a few attempted this method, with a couple of disheartening collapses. Most designs were low-lying, with catchy themes and allusive titles. It was surprising,



Morris Architects, "Fire-breathing Dragon"



Spencer Herolz Architects, "The Gamblers"



F&P Inc., "Dry Land's Reptilis"



ISD, Inc., "Well Done"

too, that a group of creative sand diggers would come up with a number of similar ideas (four dragons, two roller coasters, two liberty torches, zero actual castles).

The skills acquired by the many returning teams made for arduous judging. The

NEWS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

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Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville's collapse



The Whitney Group, "Liberty Torch"



Kendall Heaton, "A Better Mousetrap"



Watkins Carter Hamilton, "The Gods Must Be Crazy"



Irvine Associates, facade with fallen column

frazzled crowd dwindled as judges spent two hours determining winners.

The winners were Morris Architects, "Fire-breathing Dragon," Golden Bucket

Award; Spencer Herolz Architects, "The Gamblers," Silver Shovel; FKP Inc., "Dry Landis Reptilis," Bronze Shovel; University of Houston AIAS, best team T-shirt; Robert

Liner, "Tired Poor Hungry Masses," best costume; ISD, Inc., "Well Done," most outrageous; Watkins Carter Hamilton, "The Gods Must Be Crazy," most lifelike; Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville (collapsed eight-foot-tall rocket), daredevil; The Whitney Group, "Liberty Torch," public choice; and Watkins Carter Hamilton and Irvine Associates, honorable mentions.

—Gerald Moorhead

Contributing Editor Gerald Moorhead is an architect practicing in Houston.

NEWS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 43

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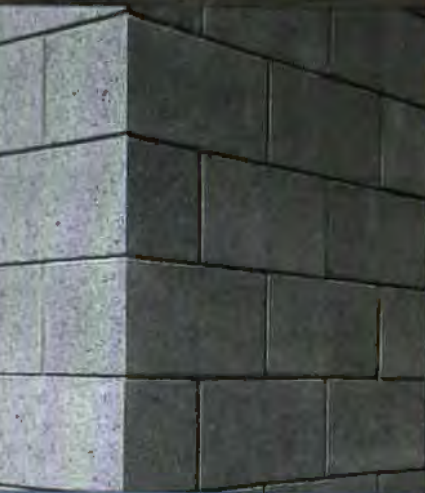


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ARCHITECTURAL VISIONARIES

ALL ARCHITECTS are visionaries. From preliminary programming and planning through design, even through the little-celebrated steps of negotiation and reshaping that go into producing buildings on time and under budget, architects see what can be and give their vision form.

Some architects go beyond the boundaries of normal architectural vision, looking for ways to redefine problems instead of merely solving them. To Doug Michels, architectural vi-

sion covers a sweep from the automobile as the center of popular culture to a new conception of the population of outer space. For the late Bruce Goff, architectural vision embraced a host

of organic forms outside the normal reach of architectural reference and brought them to bear in such mundane projects as service buildings for an East Texas lakeside housing development. For Peter Waldman, architecture reaches back into the cycles of the earth and sea and creates paths to expansion and renewal for the troubled modern American city.

The glimpses of the outer edges of architecture provided by these visionary architects are often misunderstood, and their creators must often struggle to bring their work in from the margins to the mainstream. But the mainstream is enriched and enlivened by their efforts.

—Joel Warren Barna



Bruce Goff's Plunkett House, Lake Village



Cadillac Ranch, by Art Farm



Part of the Miami-Overtown master plan by Waldman and Genik

BRUCE GOFF IN TEXAS: RENEWED VISIONS AT LAKE VILLAGE

By Willis Winters

Photography by Blackmon Winters



Bruce Goff designed 30 projects for Lake Village, 11 of which were constructed, including the Eddy Road entrance. Visible through the poles is the first Plunkett residence, which created a radical first impression for prospective home buyers.

WHEN BRUCE GOFF MOVED HIS PRACTICE from Kansas City to Tyler in 1970, it would be the last of many relocations during his long professional career. As had happened in Bartlesville in the early 1960s, his share of commissions had dwindled steadily for years. In Tyler, however, Goff would enjoy both financial stability under the patronage of former student, long-time friend, and local developer Bruce Plunkett, and renewed creative fervor presented by the challenges of several important projects.

Over half of Goff's 70 commissions in Texas were provided by Plunkett, largely as part of Lake Village, a development begun in 1969 on the eastern shore of Lake Palestine. Goff's body of work spans from the Watts Lyon house in El Paso (1929), which he designed as an apprentice at the Tulsa firm Rush, Endacott & Rush, to an unbuilt interior alteration to the Ryan Building in Bryan (1980). Eleven of Goff's 21 built projects in Texas, including 8 of the 11 houses, are located at Lake Village and three more are in Tyler: all but one can be attributed to Plunkett. As such, Lake Village boasts the largest concentration of work by Bruce Goff in any single neighborhood or development.

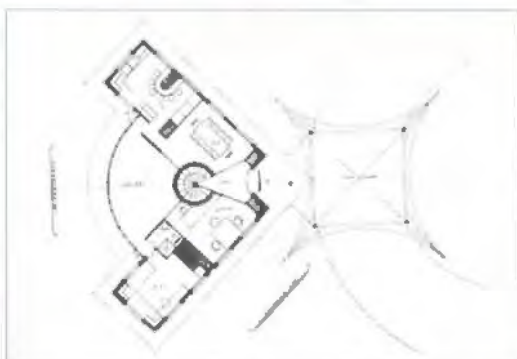
The long and fruitful relationship between developer and architect began in 1950, when Plunkett visited the School of Architecture at Oklahoma University, where Goff was starting the fourth year of his fabled tenure as chairman. Plunkett enrolled in the school and eventually became close friends with Goff. When Goff resigned his position in 1956, Plunkett suggested that he move to Tyler, but the architect, influenced by client Joe Price, chose Bartlesville, Okla., instead. Goff and Plunkett kept in contact nevertheless, and in 1965 Plunkett sent Goff several commissions, all in Tyler: a commercial building, two apartment buildings, and his house. None of the projects was realized; construction began on the house, but the site was abandoned after it was damaged in a flood.

By 1969, Plunkett had amassed considerable experience and financing for the proposed Lake Village development, a series of small villages carved from an East Texas pine forest 10 miles southwest of Tyler. Goff began designing projects for Lake Village while still in Kansas City and moved to Tyler the next year, where he would design some 30 structures for the development over a five-year period. The projects included an astonishing range of building types, from various residences and community buildings to playground equipment and a water tower. Much to Plunkett's disappointment, Goff declined to be involved in the planning of Lake Village.

Among the 30 projects, Goff produced designs for a dressing room and toilets near the lakefront, a residence for the annual Tyler Parade of Homes, and the first Lake Village residence for Bruce Plunkett (all built), as well as unrealized plans for a footbridge, a main entrance feature, a polygonal shelter pavilion, stables, and a children's play-tower.

The Plunkett house was placed prominently near the northern entrance and established a radical first impression for prospective homebuyers. The house is L-shaped in plan, with a quarter-circle living area that links the two wings. At the center of

*The success of
Goff's late work
can be attributed
in part to the stability provided by
commissions at
Lake Village.*



the house is a spiral staircase sharing the same rotation point as the living room. In elevation, Goff maintained the circular theme with half-round windows on the ground floor balanced against larger, inverted semicircular shingled panels that

enclose the second-floor projection. Plunkett had no working drawings, but started construction before Goff moved to Tyler. Partially due to the lack of detailed drawings, a carport and an onion-shaped dome atop the roof were never executed.

The two residences for Bruce Plunkett are among the few projects at Lake Village that fully reveal Goff's late creativity. The first Plunkett house (front view, TOP LEFT and MIDDLE LEFT; rear view, BOTTOM LEFT; plan, MIDDLE) expounds a circular theme in plan and elevation. The second, and more restrained, house (TOP RIGHT: entry; ABOVE: detail; LEFT: front elevation) fits best with earlier Prairie School projects, although some detailing is decidedly late Goff.



Parade of Homes house: front view



Parade of Homes house: rear view

Non-residential commissions at Lake Village included a public dressing room and toilets, FAR RIGHT, and the pool bath house, RIGHT.



In 1971, Goff designed a pool bath house constructed of masonry block and utility poles. He also used poles to define the perimeter of the swimming pool, and later to mark the Eddy Road entrance. Unbuilt that same year were designs for a community center, shops, two-story townhouses with six plan types, and a water tower. The following year Goff produced designs for four prototypical houses and a duplex. The three built versions of House A are almost identical in plan, varying only in roof and clerestory configurations and in exterior materials. House B is a two-story version of House A-1 with a projecting balcony over the front door. These houses, in addition to the two-story duplex, are unremarkable by Goff's sometimes outrageous standards; their architectural expression reflects the constraints of designing for an essentially speculative venture.

Plunkett commissioned a second home from Goff in 1974, this one closer to the lake, while the first residence was converted entirely to business use. During the same period Goff's involvement at Lake Village diminished; he produced designs for several more residential prototypes, a main entrance feature, a marina, a water tower, and a project for the Caddo Inn. The house for Plunkett was his last built commission at Lake Village. It is essentially one room wide, with a long, rectangular plan. Battered brick walls and hipped roofs

step up symmetrically to a three-story central hall and a lake overlook in a manner evocative of Goff's early Prairie School work. Interior and exterior ornament of brightly colored mirrored glass, on the other hand, provide a strong visual link to contemporaneous projects.

With the exception of the two Plunkett houses and possibly the lakefront dressing room and toilets, Goff's completed projects at Lake Village offer little insight into the genius of America's greatest organic-expressionist architect. There are no feathered ceilings, carpeted roofs, or exaggerated architectural metaphors to be found. The subdued nature of the work owes more to conservative moneylenders and a conservative market than to decreased intellectual energy. Indeed, between 1974 and his death in 1982, Goff produced some of his most significant and imaginative work, including the Mineola Community Center in northeastern Texas, additions to Joe Price's studio in Bartlesville, and the Shin'en Kan Pavilion for Japanese Ari in Los Angeles. The success of these projects must at least in part be attributed to the much-needed stability in Goff's life provided by the commissions at Lake Village.

Willis Winters, an associate in the Dallas architecture firm F&S Partners, Inc., is a frequent contributor to Texas Architect.



House B: second-floor balcony



House A-1: elevation



House A-2: elevation



ABOVE: House B, elevation; BELOW: Double House, elevation



House A-3: elevation



Bruce Goff: Toward Absolute Architecture

An exhibition devoted to the designs, architectural drawings, and buildings of Bruce Goff remains on view at Fort Worth's Amon Carter Museum through July 16. The exhibit covers Goff's 66-year career, significant for the organic architectural expression embodied in 450 commissioned designs and 147 built projects. Among the works are signature Goff singularities: walls of cannel coal, airplane-strut flooring, and ashtray windows—work described by Louis I. Kahn as "architecture of Coke bottles and old locomotive parts." For information call 817/738-1933.

DOUG MICHELS AND A VISIONARY TEXAS FRONTIER

By Julia and Joe Mashburn



From the start, Michels's work has shown the influence of the "dream cars" of the 1950s, such as the Ford F1X Atmos, ABOVE and RIGHT.



Among the early work that brought Michels national attention in the 1960s were mega-structure projects such as "Maxx," ABOVE, and supergraphic decorations in an apartment, RIGHT, designed while Michels worked in Charles Moore's New Haven office.



PORDERING THE FUTURE can be a mere escape from today's problems, as useful as rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. For some, however, envisioning the future means constructing a self-fulfilling prophecy of cultural survival that meets the test of success suggested by historian Arnold Toynbee: only cultures that can respond to future challenges are able to survive.

Doug Michels, co-founder of Ant Farm, an architecture group that worked from 1968 to 1978, is a visionary who works in this realm, where quotidian shortcomings spur creativity. Over the past 20 years, he has redefined architectural problems in increasingly wider terms, and many of his most noted projects have been located in or have origins in Texas.

Michels's work in Texas started in the 1960s, when he was in his 20s, and centered on his university lectures and experimental teaching as a guest critic. His reputation stemmed in part from an article he wrote with his then-partner Robert Field for *Architectural Forum*; it urged greater participation for students, and advocated granting them a share of their teachers' and administrators' income. Some of Michels's work from his years as a student (along with his supergraphic designs for the New Haven office of Charles Moore) was published in *Progressive Architecture*. These publications led University of Houston dean William Jenkins and professor Burdette Keeland to include Michels and Field in a 1968 series of lectures by up-and-coming young designers.

Michels's first lecture in the University of Houston series demonstrated the showmanship that has always characterized his talks: he was brought into the hall in a coffin carried by students.

Later events staged by Michels were perhaps more purely performance, such as his "Astrodaze," an assembly of the Ant Farm and South Coast design groups on the floor of Houston's Astrodome. Customized vans, inflatable structures, parachutes, and portable sound systems transformed the interior of the dome into a real-time picture of an alternative architectural future. Although such staged gatherings affirmed the power and love of technics that Ant Farm embraced, these events were not just a display of technological possibilities, but syntheses of architecture connected to the way of life of its designers and participants and an affirmation, at a distance, of popular culture. The means were obviously of the era, but the synthesizing "art as life" philosophy and the potential power of images in shaping the future were to remain central to Michels's work.

Michels has long admired the "dream cars" of the 1950s as artifacts embodying positive visions of the future. He might concur with comparisons of the automobile to the Gothic cathedral, where both cathedral and auto could be seen as anonymously designed, widely accepted, and symbolic of the aspirations of their respective cultures, and each, with its supporting social structure, taking up a large portion of the resources of its society. Showing this admiration, three of Michels's Texas projects have pointed to the importance of the auto in our world view.

The best known, Cadillac Ranch, is a monument to the rise and fall of the Cadillac tail fin. Located just west of Amarillo, it was commissioned by Stanley Marsh

Doug Michels, of Ant Farm and other collaborations, looks to the future as "the last sanctuary of creative freedom."



In keeping with his recent fascination with dolphins, Michels now calls Cadillac Ranch "a dolphin idea," as illustrated in this painting by Margaret Finch.



III and designed in 1974 by Michels, Chip Lord, and Hudson Marquez, who then constituted Ant Farm. Ten Cadillacs from the late '40s to the early '60s were lined up and buried hood first in a Texas wheat field. The monument speaks of an era when Detroit designers' dreams of technological evolution were aesthetically embraced by American society. Michels points out that the Cadillac tail fin was born of victory in the Second World War, and that it lived until "victory" dissolved in the tumultuous events of the early 1960s. Whether Michels had any of this in mind during the design of Cadillac Ranch is anyone's guess, however. Pressed to trace the design's development, Michels calls it a "dolphin idea." (Somehow more

Michels says that Ant Farm (then consisting of Michels, Chip Lord, and Hudson Marquez) designed Cadillac Ranch. ABOVE, as a monument to America's sense of victory in the prosperous years following the Second World War—a sense that dissolved in the turbulent 1960s. Zoomorphic and automobile-influenced, the House of the Century, near Houston, LEFT and BELOW, is Ant Farm's best-known residential project.



plausible in person than in print, this notion is connected to several recent projects.)

Left in the open, with no fence to keep the public at bay, this highway Stonehenge on Route 66 has become the icon of an era, ripped off and popularized from New York to Australia in advertisements, signs, television commercials, and rock music. Though battered, Cadillac Ranch has survived spray paint, dents, broken glass, stolen parts, and the elements. When approaching the site at sunset, the lost culture that believed in dreams of the future and intimately embraced the technology that would realize these dreams seems startlingly distant.

Not as well known as Cadillac Ranch, but more noted in the architectural press, is Michels's "House of the Century." Located on (private) Lake MoJo south of Houston, it was also designed and built by Ant Farm, which then included Michels, Chip Lord, and Richard Jost. The project won a 1973 P/A Award while under construction; later it was published in *Progressive Architecture*, *Casabella, Domus*, and twice in *AD*. Meant as a weekend house for a couple and two children, the house was nevertheless covered as a "playboy pad" in *Playboy*.

Its complex curved surfaces were studied in clay models, with the final model being sliced up in equally spaced vertical sections so that sectional curves could be scaled up and lofted full size. The sections were then replicated in bent reinforcing bar, which was erected vertically on the slab, supported by two-by-four scaffolding, producing a full-scale "wireframe" view of the house. This was covered with five layers of chicken wire, tightly tied and compressed into lathing for the troweled concrete finish. The concrete, the workers proudly reported, "rang like a bell" when it was cured.

As the shapes of the house developed, automotive influences became more visible. The entry tube with its flush zipper-gasketed glazing and smooth finishes, the shape of the shell and windows, and the headliner material used for walls and ceiling—all could be traced to cars of the '50s, particularly the Buick, whose front fender shows in the treatment of the window and adjacent exterior forms. Some critics see it as a lunar module, an automobile, or as erotic sculpture; others have commented on the "extraordinarily violent" contrast between the interior and exterior. But the strongest attribute of the house is its unity of otherworldliness and serenity. Resting lightly in its sylvan landscape, the house seems to be paying a temporary visit, while the interior suggests both aquatic origins and its mysterious site. Michels de-

scribes the project as "alien architecture" that looks "like it just landed."

In a sense, the construction of the house was itself a self-fulfilling prophecy, for as the preliminary designs materialized, it was clear that construction techniques would have to be invented to make it work, much as the moon-landing project was being tackled at nearby NASA. The designers and owners frequently conferred, developing a client-designer-builder relationship that was itself a critique of and alternative to the status quo. Life

at the MoJo site took on its own social structure. Nomadic architectural workers (many from the earlier South Coast and University of Houston days) gathered, willing to give up comfort and privacy to see the project through. Weeks and months passed; babies were born, and children grew. Houston friends visited for long talks on the pier outside Michels's

trailer and for gatherings in the large main house. For a wedding celebrated at the job site (and a later P/A photograph) Michels and Jost shaved their heads; lacking dress shoes, Michels painted his feet black.

A third, more recent Michels project uses automobile imagery as roadside sculpture: S.T.P. (Save the Planets) is located at Houston's Hard Rock Cafe. For this icon of Space City, long devoted to its freeway culture, Michels, Lord, and Marquez chose a 1963 Thunderbird—"the car one would choose to fly through space"—soaring toward the Texas sky on its pylon. The pylon base is filled with a "petroleum culture diorama" in an airtight enclosure (because of the greenhouse effect this produces, the plastic bottles and cans now exist, like Cadillac Ranch, in an accelerated state of decay). More than advertising, the sign comments on Houston and our oil-dependent society; in it, a city's collective dreams are made real.

In the 1970s, Michels's project "Bluestar" was born in Texas at Houston's Plaza Hotel (or perhaps, Michels says, it was in the gas line at the service station while he waited to fill his Cadillac Eldorado). Michels and Jost were in Houston realizing their design (with image consultant Alex Morphet) for "Computer Teleport," an office/communications link at home for clients Rudge and Nancy Allen, undertaken as the energy crunch cut short the American dream of the '50s and '60s. It was time to think of new discoveries, new horizons, new thrills. For Michels, this meant space. Michels's design for a space station, the first think tank in space, would be a "Cathedral of Ideas" as both the medium and the monument for future evolution. Michels toyed with a jumble of

Tracing the roots of the image behind Ant Farm's Cadillac Ranch project, Michels calls it "a dolphin idea."

potent images; the picture of earth from space and an image of a human floating weightless in space connected to the mother ship by his technological umbilical cord. The pivotal image for the birth of *Bluestar* sprang from the fact that fluids in space form perfect spheres. Michels explains, "*Bluestar* came in a vision, completely designed," but "did not appear in its final delineated state for eight more years."

Completed while Michels was a Harvard University Loeb Fellow in 1985, *Bluestar* is a 21st-century space station that is "not simply a functionalist machine in space. [Rather, it will] initiate the search for an expressive architecture worthy of a human-made heavenly body." Michels proposes that "*Bluestar* will harbor the broadest possible range of inquiry, from the artistic to the psychological to the cybernetic, not merely the narrow experimentation of space engineering typical of its predecessors." Enlightened humans are not the only *Bluestar* passengers; in the center of the station, suspended in a 250-foot-diameter sphere of water, is a crew of dolphin astronauts. In Michels's space station, our evolution into space explorers along with other species is presented as an actual near-future possibility. The project, though as yet unrealized, was exhibited at the AIA's Octagon Museum in 1986.

Practicing in Washington, D.C., since 1984, Michels has made several trips to Japan, where proposed projects are under way. He also has been developing his design for "*Dolphin America*," a project located in Washington, D.C., which includes a hotel with an atrium space in the center for, of course, dolphins as well as humans. The dolphins will exist in an environment that Michels describes as "being governed by the highest standards of ethical treatment and respect for dolphin health, intelligence, and civilization." The form of the building echoes the dolphins' curved body shapes, using blue mirror glass and white marble. Michels predicts that here, "bottle-nosed dolphins will create a vibrant atmosphere of energy and imagination."

Today, Michels is deeply concerned about views of the future as portrayed in art and architecture. He says that the media and "commissars of culture" have "banished originality and innovation from art and architecture with subtle repression." He describes much of architecture today as characterized by "entropy, cynical pessimism, and the myopic nostalgia of the postmodern hoax." On a recent poster Michels suggests that "D" words—"death, decadence, decline, defeat, defamation, degeneration, depression, despair, destruction, and disease"—describe choices made by some in today's architectural climate. As an alternative, Michels suggests an architectural future evolving



"S.T.P." (Save the Planets). TOP, at Houston's Hard Rock Cafe, elevates a 1963 Thunderbird and a diorama of petroleum-based goods. ABOVE.



Michels, Richard Jost, and Alex Morphet designed the unrealized "Computer Teleport," a combination office and communications link, for clients in Houston.

from "creative freedom and visionary advance," describable by a list of "I" words: "idealism, imagination, independence, individualism, initiative, innovation, inspiration, integrity, intelligence, and invention." Michels suggests that, as a conceptual territory, the future is powerful—"the last sanctuary of creative freedom." In Michels's view, we may have no choice but to dream or die.

Parallels can be drawn between Michels's projects and other outgrowths of "pop" culture—Robert Venturi, for example. But Venturi's conscious semiotization of discrete parts and his mirroring and acceptance of context is not present in Michels's work. Michels joins diverse influences, including automotive forms, in the House of the Century and other projects, but he produces a unity that fits neither the duck nor the billboard of Venturi's definition. And where Venturi accepts the present, Michels is reverent toward the future. "I would rather create history than copy history," he says.

Japanese architect Arata Isozaki has characterized Archigram, which worked at about the same time as Ant Farm, as "a style without a manifesto." While for Archigram technology was both the medium and the message, Michels views technology as part of the given of today's culture, to be used simply as a means. Unlike that of Archigram, Michels's work is not always identifiable stylistically, while it is supported by a distinct declaration of intentions. But the emphasis on superscaled systems, like that of Archigram, runs consistently through his work from the earliest days to the most recent projects.

Michels would prefer to have his work compared to that of the Italian Futurists, who also aimed at a mass audience in expressing their idealization of the future. Marinetti and Boccioni declared themselves "the primitives of a new sensibility," who sought to unite "distant, diverse, and seemingly hostile things." Michels's work is clearly based on parallel intentions.

Julia Mashburn is a free-lance writer and designer. She holds a bachelor's degree in art and a master's degree in studies of the future. Prize-winning architect Joe Mashburn is Associate Professor and Associate Department Head of Architecture at Texas A&M University. Their house was featured in the March/April 1986 Texas Architect.

Michels suggests that, as conceptual territory, the future is powerful; in it, our choice may be to dream or to die.



Project Bluestar: plan view



Project Bluestar: "Thought Laboratory"

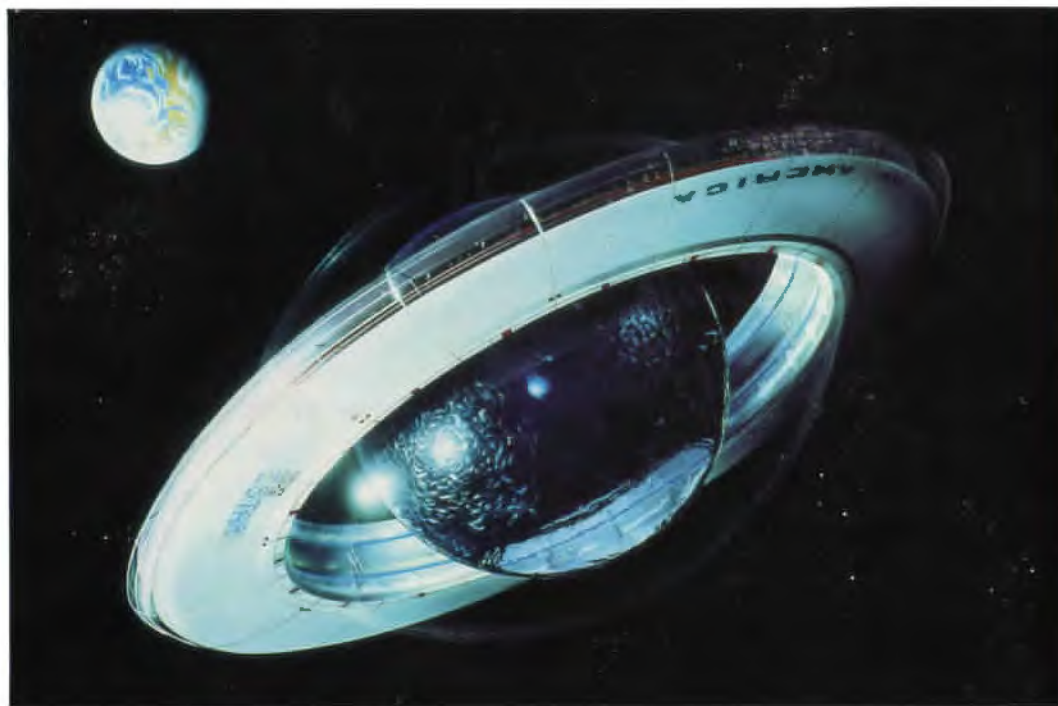


Project Bluestar: "Media Laboratory"

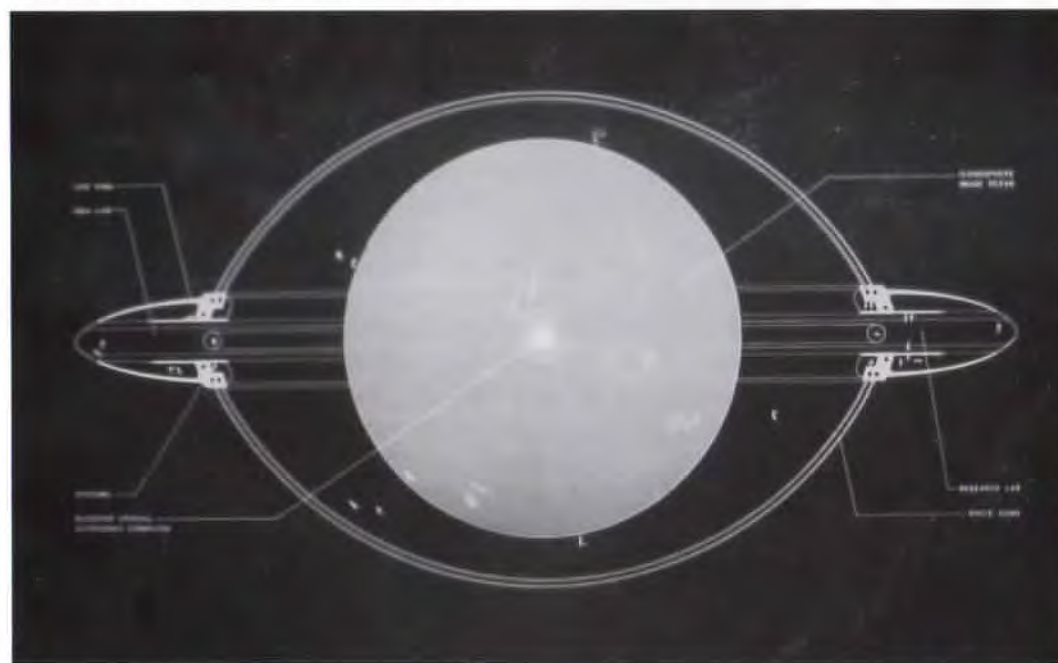


Project Bluestar: "Research Laboratory in the Life Ring"

Michels designed Project Bluestar as a different kind of space station. Conventional designs, intended for human habitation only, use earth-made materials and are organized to give inhabitants a "local vertical"—a sense of up and down mimicking that of earth. By contrast, Bluestar would support, within a shell of space-made glass, a 250-foot sphere of water—an "iconosphere"—where humans and dolphins would explore the evolution of mind set free from earth's bonds. Dolphins would ultrasonically program a central computer and would use holographic projections to study the interface between biological and electronic systems. Laboratories in the exterior "life ring," without gravitational orientation, would be devoted to the study of thought, of communication, and of life. "Where the body leads, consciousness follows," says Michels. "We can barely speculate about the transformations of mind that life without gravity will augur."



Perspective of Project Bluestar in geosynchronous orbit



Project Bluestar: section



Project Bluestar: view from iconosphere



Project Bluestar: detail of humans' quarters

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WALDMAN'S FABLES OF URBAN LIFE

By Joel Warren Barna



Peter Waldman takes Sebastiano Serlio's proposals for stage sets, published in 1545, as metaphors for American urban space. The "circumstantial," or comic, TOP, is the most common type of landscape, while the "rational" type, CENTER, which is appropriate for tragedies, represents the ideal of most contemporary urban planning. Waldman says that "by focusing on breaking ground as the primal architectural act," he attempts to reintroduce the missing dimension: the "satiric." BOTTOM.

IN THE PUBLIC'S MIND, and in the experience of most in the architectural profession, architects design to build. But architecture also involves a kind of narrative, an envisioning of the place to be created. To Houston architect and educator Peter Waldman, projects begin not just with forms but with stories: through them he envisions not only the place but the social function, and even the society, that a project will create. Although understanding Waldman's method requires some background, it reveals a response to one of architectural theory's current problems.

A generation ago, linguistics, the social sciences, and literature came to be dominated by so-called structuralist theories. In linguistics, structuralism asserted that structural patterns connected to the mind's basic processes shape, and even constitute, human experience. In literary theory, structuralism emphasized not the surface content of narratives but the relationships of "deep structures," insisting that these relationships were the *real* content of the story. "The new fabulism," as practiced by such writers as Umberto Eco and Italo Calvino, along with Gabriel García Márquez and other "magical realists," showed the influence of this literary-critical trend; these writers created what looked at first like old-fashioned stories, which turned out to be reflexive meditations on writing and reading.

In architecture, the movement called postmodernism (to connect it with kindred movements in the visual arts, and since "structuralism" already had a meaning allied with architectural modernism) similarly claimed that historical architectural forms represented "deep structures" in human consciousness and in society, which architecture had ignored at its own—and society's—peril. Thus, symmetrical compositions, decorative tops replacing flat roofs on skyscrapers, and pediments on just about any building type, were among the devices used to reintroduce a connection with "deep structures" that modernism had allegedly broken, providing an eclectic stylistic grammar that now dominates mainstream architectural practice.

A problem with designing according to the structuralist-literary analogy quickly emerged, however. Words and languages *denote*, providing direct, specific meanings in a way that architecture, which merely *connotes*, cannot. Postmodern architects, who started out trying to re-establish connections with the broader culture, found that the use of postmodern forms, at least in major public buildings, came to symbolize only that the architect was interested in symbolism. Once again, an architectural movement had become a hall of mirrors, with the architectural object closed in on itself (except when responding to the commercial intentions of developers).

Some architects, however, appropriated techniques from the "new fabulists." They managed to maintain a connection with the world outside architecture, along with a critical stance relative to the programs of their clients. Recent projects by Peter Waldman (many designed in collaboration with Christopher Genik, now of Los Angeles) provide prime examples of the fabulist strategy.

The projects include urban-design master plans for Times Square in New York, for the campus of the University of Miami, and for the Overtown area of Miami.

Houston architect and educator Peter Waldman constructs fables of satiric nature to tame the rampant rationalism of architecture in our time.

along with designs for a gate at Harvard University and a futures market in Houston built from derelict grain elevators. All, prepared for competitions, have not been executed. But 28 residences in Princeton, N.J., and two in Houston have been built or are under construction, and sculptural/architectural pieces by Waldman and Genik have been built for exhibitions at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and the American Crafts Museum.

For each of these projects, Waldman has devised a story that reframes the original program in terms of connections to nature (filtered through myths that are in turn populated by quasi-allegorical figures) and of connections to broader social questions. Waldman says his work is "founded on the invention of spatial Tales of Origin" and focuses "on a 'program for' as well as 'the construction of' architecture."

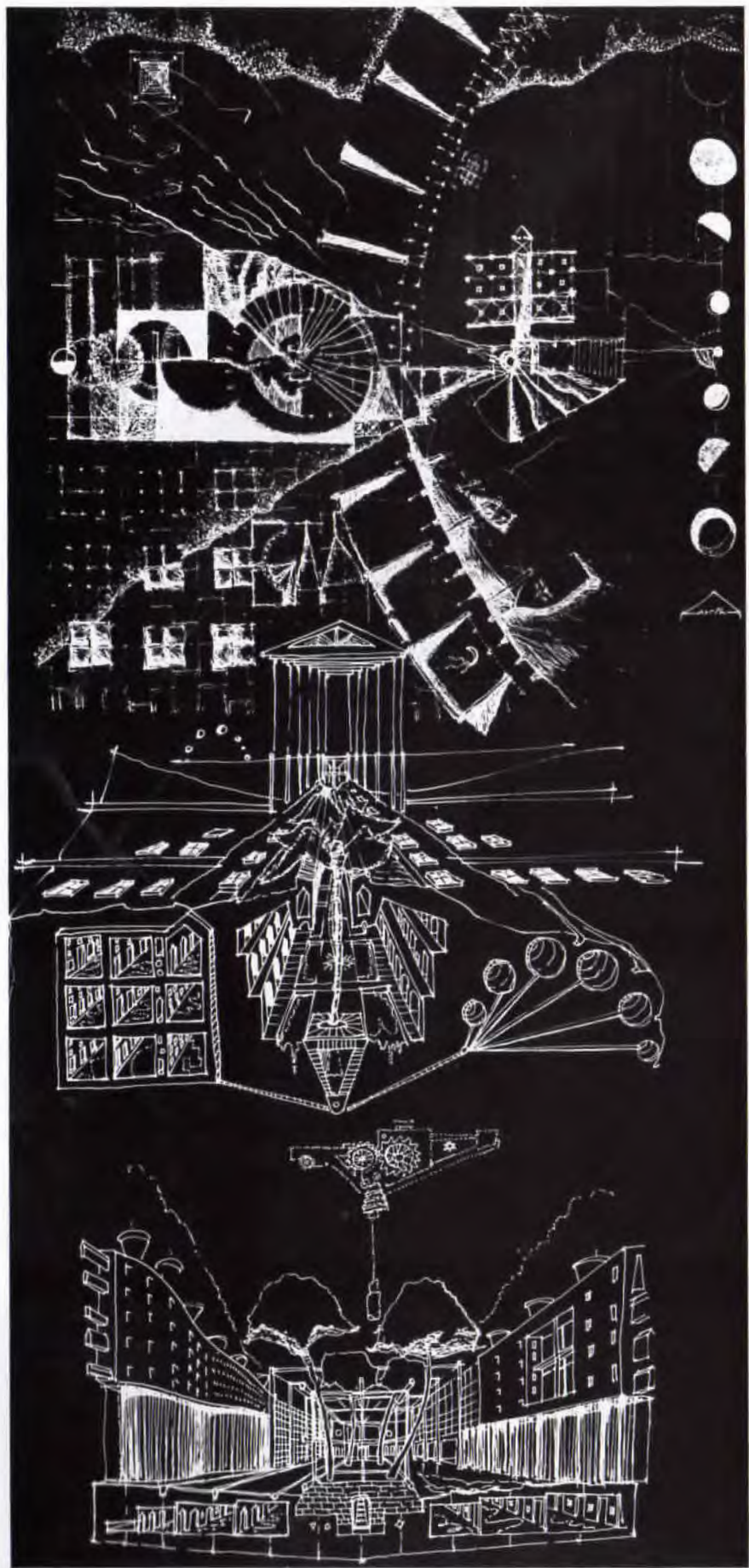
The tales of origin vary from project to project, but the master plans all start from variations on stage sets proposed by Sebastiano Serlio in *Il Secondo Libro di Prospettiva*—the Tragic (rational), the Comic (circumstantial), and the Satiric (bestial). As the names imply, each of these is intended as appropriate to a theatrical type.

In the first of a series of seemingly arbitrary imaginative leaps, Waldman treats these sets as analogues of types of urban landscape found in modern American cities: the rational representing planned development, the circumstantial representing uncoordinated urban growth, and the satiric representing the landscape before it is built on. "Here Satyrs camp out beneath a canopy of trees to clear the forest and level the ground to stockpile timber and to quarry building stone," Waldman says. Extending the analogy, Waldman says that, to work, cities must portray evidence of all three conditions, and that American cities have too much circumstantiality and too little of the satiric, natural dimension. Thus his tales of origin focus on breaking ground as the primal architectural act. He constructs stories in which natural calamities and cycles first destroy city precincts, then re-establish the preconditions of urban form. Quarrying, clearing, leveling, and stockpiling are integrated with the final architectural forms proposed, as are explicit formal representations of lunar cycles and tides. "It is architecture that focuses on the process and the builders as much as the product," says Waldman.

The plan for Miami-Overtown, by the Waldman Genik Studio, is typical of the method. The competition, sponsored by Miami/AIA and the city's planning department in 1984, called for a six-block-long streetscape connecting an existing marina on Biscayne Bay to downtown Miami through the decaying, 1920s-vintage Overtown district, which was the center both of musical

In the Miami-Overtown master-plan project by The Waldman-Genik Studio, the designers propose to recreate the primal "satiric" state of the area, instead of cooperating in a typical gentrification project. In their scheme, housing and an underground futures market are quarried from the site; a cluster of government buildings grows at the center; an acropolis rises at the northern end, drawing visitors to the area's night clubs; and an orchard spreads into the surrounding area, establishing a pattern for later city growth.





Studies for a sequence of spaces in Miami-Overtown

nightlife and church life for the area's African-American community, and which was being hemmed in by rapid development. The plan was to stimulate both daytime and nighttime tourism and to include government buildings and a shopping area as well as a station for a proposed light-rail system. The Waldman Genik proposal took third place; the first-place plan was not executed, and later rioting made the area a no-man's land.

"The winning proposal was for new street furniture and lighting," recalls Waldman, "but Chris [Genik] and I proposed creating an 'undertown' in Overtown." They started by focusing on the nightlife of the area. In their fable of origin—which is exceptionally sketchy, since they were limited to only 75 words—the target area is cleared by a biblical tidal wave; an orchard grows up, and the city, founded by Ponce de Leon and visited by such personages as Gulliver, Moses, and Hannibal, spreads out into it. An underground *souk* is dug into the area's center, with structures above it built from the quarried stone; at first, these provide shelters for the homeless; later, a train station on an acropolis beckons visitors to the area's "nocturnal depths."

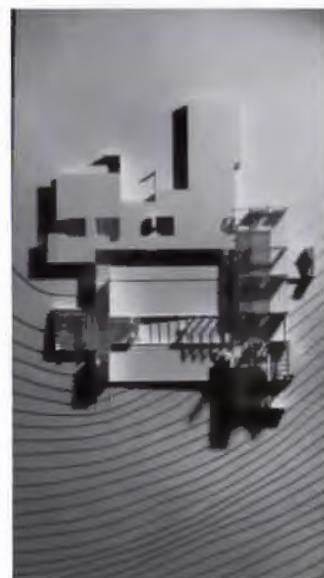
While invoking figures like Noah and Ponce de Leon may seem merely notional, the fable recalls the area's discovery in a search for the waters of eternal youth, the flood's wrathful purgation of sinful cities, and Miami's precarious position at the ocean's edge. And Waldman and Genik's creation of the orchard and the underground market, with its mysteriously lunar plumbing, turns what was essentially a competition for a gentrification project into a powerful urban metaphor.

Waldman says people who compare his projects to Rube Goldberg contraptions are missing the point. "These ideas are serious, even though they are about building," he says. Indeed, if there is a real problem with Waldman's style it is not practicality but narrative pulse. His constructions are not only hermetic; they can seem to drift, from A to Z, lacking the sense of necessity that impels a good story to its conclusion.

Nevertheless, in the Overtown project, he and Genik accomplish a needed redefinition of the city-building task. They "de-center" the architectural object, claim a shaping role for the architect that enfolds that of the client, focus on connections with a world that stretches the limit of architectural form, and redefine the city as a self-renewing process analogous to life itself. Such expansive architectural vision pushes beyond the program to an examination of architecture itself. The steps of a Waldman-Genik project matter less than an attempt to take the discipline beyond manipulation of cultural signifiers to a vision of the embodiment of mind.



Breaking ground is also the primal architectural act in Peter Waldman's residential projects. The Garden House in Princeton, N.J., was a linear one-story house designed for a retired professor by Thaddeus Longstreth, a disciple of Richard Neutra. Sited on 10 wooded acres, it opened to the north. New owners wanted more room, a different sequence of spaces, more direct light indoors, and a stronger response to the site (including protection from the herd of deer that often ate the family's garden). These photographs show the process by which Waldman Architects responded to the program: snap lines measure the site; trenches are dug for six retaining walls to level an interior garden; new walls orient the house east-to-west; new rooms respond to daylight, moonlight, and dawn; framing establishes a new uniformity throughout; the house is enclosed and reoriented to the interior with its garden and pool. "The house, says Waldman, "is open-ended, deliberately incomplete, always in construction, a house for scientists and magicians and an occasional lunatic." (Design team: Peter Waldman, Scott Bernhard, Martin Feiersinger)



INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE: BRAVURA MINIMALISM

By Joel Warren Barna

Photography by Blackmon Winters



First-floor plan



Front elevation

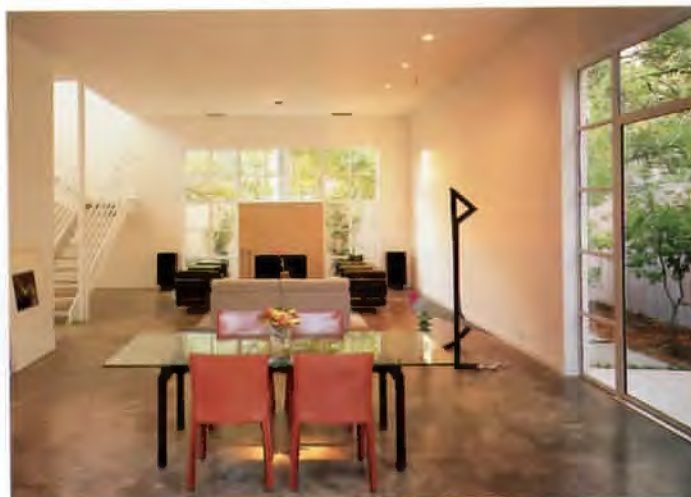


Corridor past kitchen enclosure

LIONEL MORRISON'S Springbrook Townhouses, with their stripped geometry and meticulous detail, mark an architectural climax for a small in-town neighborhood.

Now a partner in the Dallas firm Omniplan, Morrison (with his wife and sometime collaborator, architect Susan Seifert) has designed three townhouse projects on the block-long Armstrong Avenue, refining his medium-tech, modernist vocabulary until every element seems at once daring and at ease.

The Springbrook houses, on a narrow lot, are entered from a walled garden or through a motor court at the rear. The two-story hip-roofed forms match the scale of the neighborhood and extend Morrison's previous flat-roofed vocabulary. The four-square containment of the exterior disappears in the double-height interiors. Where one might expect a postmodernist hierarchy of rooms, Morrison has created a 36-foot-square loft-like space animated by structural bravura; the 12-foot ceiling is met only by the enclosure for the restroom and a single pipe column. The floor is



Smooth finishes emphasize the openness of the Springbrook Townhouses.

finished in smooth stained concrete, while the walls open onto a private patio and garden. The second floor, with its 10-foot ceilings, is partitioned into private areas, but again the ceiling is met only by structural walls; others are either open or glazed below the ceiling line.

In the Springbrook Townhouses, Lionel Morrison renews a connection made by artist James McNeil Whistler, who first encountered Japanese art over a century ago—

Morrison, like Whistler, shows that interiors stripped to the essentials can become part of an evolving American idiom.

PROJECT: Springbrook Townhouses

ARCHITECT: Lionel Morrison/Omniplan, Inc.

CONTRACTOR: Joe Vance Associates, Inc.

CONSULTANTS: Randy Cooper Consulting Engineers



Second-floor study



ABOVE: View from second-floor landing; FACING PAGE: stairs



Victoria House

By Janice Shefelman

Illustrations by Tom Shefelman

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988

32 pages, \$12.95 hardcover

Reviewed by Kenneth and Kim Hafertepe

Because architects need to communicate ideas to clients, to builders, and to each other, skill in the visual arts has always been important to their practice. Tom Shefelman of Austin is one architect whose skill with watercolors has led to what is virtually a second career as an illustrator of children's books.

Shefelman became an illustrator when his wife, Janice, wrote *A Paradise Called Texas*. Tom, along with sons Karl and Dan, illustrated the book, published in 1983, along with two subsequent novels. Now Janice and Tom have collaborated on their first picture book, *Victoria House*.

The book had many sources of inspiration, but an important stimulus was a classic children's book against which the Shefelmans reacted: *The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton. Little House originally lived an idyllic country existence, but urban growth transformed her setting first into suburbia, then into a brownstone jungle, and ultimately into a forest of skyscrapers. In the "happy" ending, Little House is moved again to the country, where life is peaceful, beautiful, and close to nature.

The Shefelmans set out to create a more positive view of the city. "We wanted to give kids a book about the joys of living in the city, instead of fleeing to the country for a better life," says Janice. *Victoria House*, like *Little House*, was built in the country, but the Shefelmans' depiction of encroaching development is far more subtle: an auto salvage yard is the harbinger of a nearby urban area, but a developer envisions "a boulevard lined with Spanish-style buildings" running through Victoria's front yard. Fortunately for the house, the project architect, Sarah, falls in love with Victoria and moves her to an urban residential neighborhood, where the house is lovingly restored.

The Shefelmans wanted not to set their story in generic landscapes, urban or rural, but to capture the essence of particular



Replete with ink-and-watercolor illustrations, *Victoria House* incorporates many familiar Austin images.

LEFT: Carpenter "Willie" reviews plans for restoration of the relocated house. BE-LOW LEFT: cover



places. Victoria's original site is a hill-country scene west of Austin. Tom incorporated a view of nearby Lake Austin, not actually visible from that location. The neighborhood to which the house is moved is modeled on the historic Fan district of Richmond, Va.; Tom decreased the district's density and added silhouettes of several Austin landmarks to its skyline.

Victoria House herself has a real-life prototype, a house in Navasota that the Shefelmans discovered while traveling to a children's book festival. All the exuberant Victorian woodwork depicted in the book was found here, including the extraordinary curvilinear spindlework in the entry hall.

Originally, Victoria House was strongly anthropomorphic, with two upstairs windows and a broad downstairs window forming eyes and a mouth. But, says Tom, "we had to tone down the animation since, to be

moved to the city, Victoria had to be cut in half." Indeed, the Shefelmans note that children seem to be especially interested in the how-to aspects of the book, such as the mechanics of moving a house. They say kids are also intrigued by the plan and section drawings. At the same time the book appeals to an older (and upscale) audience through the theme of urban pioneering.

Tom Shefelman sees *Victoria House* as an antidote to the long-treasured American myth "that a move to the country from the bad old city is good," but he is also aware that an alternative view of things may be a "counter-myth." He imagines a sequel to Burton's *The Little House* in which the house, safely removed to the country, is once again threatened by urban growth, causing the story to repeat itself. And what might a sequel to *Victoria House* be? "Perhaps the neighborhood that has been restored will decline again, and the problem of urban decay would have to be faced."

These are hefty ideas for a 32-page picture book, but children's stories have always dealt with important cultural and personal issues. *Victoria House* is a visual treat that should appeal to readers of many ages as a preservation fable for our time.

Architectural historian Kenneth Hafertepe's most recent book is *A History of the French Legation in Texas*; Kim Troutman Hafertepe is a graduate student in child development at the University of Texas at Austin.

Cubit Conference Hails Norberg-Schulz

Christian Norberg-Schulz and Kenneth Frampton were among the architectural theorists who presented papers in College Station Apr. 12-14 for the first *Cubit* International Symposium on Architecture and Culture. Sponsored by the schools of architecture at Texas A&M University and the University of Houston (with the Brochstein Foundation), the conference was organized by Malcolm Quantrill, distinguished professor of architecture at Texas A&M, in honor of Norberg-Schulz.

Professor Peter Jacobs of l'Université de Montréal opened the conference Apr. 12 with a lecture entitled "Cultural Values in the Changing Landscape."

Frampton, currently on the faculty of Columbia University, opened the Apr. 13 session with a lecture entitled "Rappelles à l'ordre: The Case for the Tectonic," which was an extended criticism of the "excessive spatial emphasis of modern architecture" and the "ambiguities introduced by the impulse toward the scenographic in bourgeois culture." The notion of the tectonic, as developed by Wölfflin, Semper, and Heidegger, among others, he said, is required if architecture is to be reconstituted "as a poetics of construction" and saved from the economic determinism of current European culture. "Any future architecture must be a culture of resistance, a global resistance against the mindless inorganic maximization" that governs society, he said.

Philosopher Karsten Harries of Yale invoked many of the same sources as Frampton in his lecture "Time, Death, and Architecture." Harries cited Heidegger's conception of dwelling as a guide to an authentic architecture that embraces all of human experience, including death. To embody "dwelling," he said, "a building must be able to banish the terror of time, while still being open to the experience of temporality." Classicism, with its emphasis on timeless forms, denies the experience of temporality, "and leads to a machine aesthetic," he added. By contrast, buildings that betray time's effects create a sense of grandeur and the range of human capacity. "Heidegger is right," Harries said. "Genuine dwelling requires renunciation of paradise," with its seductive illusion of timelessness.

The Heidegger fest continued with Norberg-Schulz's talk entitled "Order and



Cubit speaker Kenneth Frampton, LEFT; panelists (l-r) Karsten Harries, Frampton, and Christian Norberg-Schulz, ABOVE

Change in Architecture." Norberg-Schulz cited Heidegger among his sources to refute the notion that "society undergoes such radical change that order is meaningless"—

NEWS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 45

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an idea most strongly advanced by today's deconstructivist theorists, he said. Architecture, he said, following Heidegger, only speaks when it "reveals the essence of the inhabited landscape," relating human activities to the environment. The semiological approach to architecture fails because it treats building as nothing more than denotation, he said, whereas "a building is not just a sign: it's an increase in being." In conclusion, he said, "The basis of architecture [is not] rules or models, but an abyss out of which answers appear and disappear."

A poetry reading, featuring Quantrill, Paul Christensen, Lars Gustafsson, Herbert Lomas, and Christopher Middleton, followed the session. The next day Frampton, Harries, Norberg-Schulz, and other distinguished guests judged a group of projects by teams from Texas' architecture schools.

The proceedings of the symposium will be published in 1990 as the first issue of *Cubit*, edited by Quantrill, with UH professor Bruce Webb as deputy editor.

—JWB

IN PROGRESS

PROJECT: *New Harris County Detention Center*

CLIENT: *Harris County*

DEVELOPER: *Facilities Development Group, Houston*

ARCHITECT: *Morris Architects, Houston (John Weigman, president; Pete Ed Garrett, design principal)*

CONSULTANTS: *W. S. Bellows Construction Corp., construction advisor; Haywood, Jordan, McCowan of Houston and Roy Harper & Associates, consulting architects; Harry Golemon Architects, associate architect; W. Gene Williams & Associates, detention advisor; The Durrant Group, architectural detention consultant; Security Design, security consultant; Tapley/Lunow Architects, landscape architect; Turner, Collie & Braden, hydrology; Carter & Burgess, mechanical, electrical, plumbing; Nathe-lyne A. Kennedy & Associates and Walter P. Moore & Associates, structural, civil; Ulrich Engineers, geotechnical*
CONTRACTOR: *Manhattan Construction Co., Houston*



The 63-year-old Houston Terminal and Cold Storage Warehouse, TOP, will emerge from its adaptation as the Harris County Detention Center. ABOVE, scheduled for completion in late 1990.

The Harris County Detention Center is a creative renovation of and addition to the 63-year-old Houston Terminal and Cold Storage Warehouse on Buffalo Bayou

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that seeks to answer a 1987 federal court order to upgrade the Harris County jail system. The project, begun earlier this year by a team led by the Houston-based Facilities Development Group, will cost \$78 million and will open 4,200 new beds, more than doubling the county's detention capacity.

Although it promised to relieve jail overcrowding, the detention center faced early opposition from several groups concerned about its visual and social impact on its neighbors: the University of Houston downtown campus, Buffalo and White Oak bayous, and Allen's Landing, the birthplace of the city. Assuaging opponents was handled "on a personal basis, talking to lots of people," says FDG Chairman Richard Knight. Included in the package from the beginning, he points out, was a \$1.5-million landscaped park at bayou's edge, replacing an ominous existing parking structure; an enclosed inmate-transfer tunnel; and a building exterior that projected a civic rather than a jail-like image. The Buffalo Bayou Partnership, a citizens' group, also reviewed plans as they were developed, says Knight.

By comparison, FDG's task in persuading the county to choose its development



Site plan: (1) Harris County Detention Center, (2) secure tunnel connection, (3) proposed Central Processing Center, (4) existing Harris County Jail, (5) Buffalo Bayou, (6) White Oak Bayou, (7) University of Houston Downtown Campus.

package over those of two competitors was easy, according to Knight. He says converting the cold-storage warehouse to inmate housing was advantageous because the existing structure could not only be reused

but could allow a faster construction schedule and could support three additional floors since detention, as compared to industrial cold storage, created a lighter load. The other proposals called for entirely new construction. In addition, FDG's site was large enough to support the required number of inmates on the fewest number of floors, allowing reduced operating costs.

The building's new skin, says Morris Architects Design Principal Pete Ed Garrett, derives its material, brick, from its warehouse-district neighborhood and its rust and tan colors from nearby UH buildings.

Meanwhile, southeast of the detention center across Buffalo Bayou is the site of the county's planned Central Processing Center, currently undergoing schematic design by Harry Golemon Architects (also a member of the FDG team). When completed in late 1990, the processing center will take over administrative and inmate-transfer functions from the current jail. Transfers between the processing center and the new and old jails will occur through the planned connecting tunnels and bridge.

—RDT

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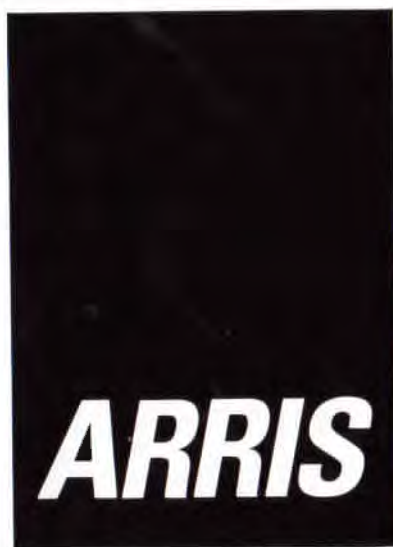
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EVENTS

The Shape of Light. This photographic essay on the sculptural forms of Egyptian architecture by photographer Carolyn Brown and architect Philip C. Henderson is an interpretation of the role light plays in architectural and sculptural forms. It remains on display at the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library's Community Showcase in Dallas through July 31.

A Century of Sculpture in Texas, 1889-1989. This exhibit remains at UT Austin's Huntington Art Gallery through Aug. 13.

Excellence 89. The Texas Sculpture Association will exhibit the winners of its nationwide competition for work in all media, July 10 to Aug. 25, at the Plaza of the Americas in Dallas. 214/233-9866

Proud Hands. The second annual juried exposition of architectural art by Texas artists, architects, and artisans will be held on Laguna Gloria Art Museum grounds in Austin, Oct. 20-22. 512/478-7742

On Craft and Building. The UT Austin School of Architecture's Center for the Study of American Architecture will sponsor a symposium to examine the role of craft in architecture, Oct. 20. 512/471-1922

Icons of Faith. Texas Tech University's College of Architecture will hold a regional symposium on the preservation of religious architecture in Mexico and the Southwest, Nov. 2-3. 806/742-3136

Design competitions. *TSA Design Awards:* the annual competition for work by members of the Texas Society of Architects; entry deadline is Oct. 5; call Lucretia Crenwelge (512/478-7386). *Design Rhode Island:* prototypical solutions for affordable housing to be built in the state; registration deadline is July 15; call Jean Burritt Robertson (401/751-5566). *The Great American Home Awards:* the National Trust for Historic Preservation's program for outstanding home renovations; entry deadline is July 30; call Chas A. Miller III (202/673-4074). *CRSI Design Awards:* a competition for site-cast concrete-structure design for structures completed in the U.S. between Jan. 1, 1987, and Nov. 3, 1989; entry deadline is Nov. 3; call 312/517-1200.

SCHOOLS



Univ. of Houston and Prairie View A&M— Architecture students created tension in a structural, and sculptural, way at the recent Houston International Festival. "In His Presence" was designed by third-year students at UH with faculty guidance by Tom Colbert and John Lemr. Third-, fourth-, and fifth-year students at Prairie View designed "Self-Motivation" under faculty direction by Marshall Brown and Simon Wiltz.

Also at the festival were fabric sculptural "fingers" by Xavier Juillot. Having installed his work previously at an authentic Ledoux-designed building in France, Juillot took his festival creation to that Johnsonian homage to Ledoux, UH's College of Architecture.



"Building a Little Tension" at the International Festival inspired structures built from little more than aluminum tubes and wire cable. FAR LEFT: "In His Presence"; LEFT: "Self-Motivation"; BELOW: Xavier Juillot's 400-foot "fingers"



Univ. of Houston—Level II Graduate students Karl Elzinga, Bryan Haworth, and Peter Noldt won a \$2,500 first prize in a design competition for the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park. Their faculty sponsor was Barry Moore, FAIA.

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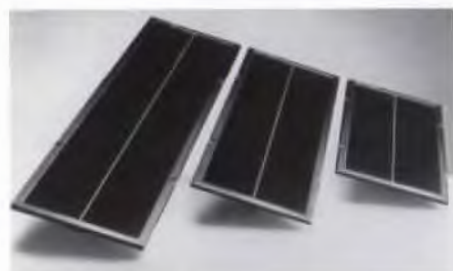
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Mario Bellini's considerable design talent has been tapped by **Atelier International** for Onda Quadra (Square Wave), an additive collection of furniture elements.

Circle reader inquiry 26.



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R. S. Means Company, Inc., has published *Understanding the Legal Aspects of Design/Build*, a 370-page guide to legal and operational issues common to design/build construction. The author, **Timothy R. Twomey**, is an architect and attorney.

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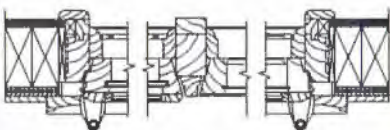
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MUSINGS

ARCHITECTURAL JOURNEYS

By David Braden, FAIA

BY ANY REASONABLE STANDARD in the affairs of this land, I lead neither a dull nor an exceptionally sedentary life. Consider some recent peregrinations:

Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Society of Architects invited me to speak at their annual meeting in Oconomowoc. I was the sole exception among a catalog of experts who came from Boston, New York, London, etc., to enlighten the membership on "Structure in Architecture." As friend Jack Hartray, FAIA, of Chicago says: "It is traditional in Christian countries to believe all wise men come from the east. However, when you need comic relief you turn to Texas!"

Hartray has also observed that speakers at architectural gatherings usually have interesting work, but, like Calabrian donkeys, carry enormous loads of theory and slides. I, carrying only my concern for the future of America, such fellow Texans as Tower and Wright, and other fleeting celebrities, am inevitably the only one who speaks with the lights on. Perhaps everyone would feel better if I, too, gave my message in the dark.

Texas. On to a hearing as a construction arbitrator! Those of you who enjoy disputes and amelioration should get into this line of work. It offers one the opportunity to inject fairness into an otherwise legal process and to bone up on the general conditions of the contract. You will come away feeling you have bettered mankind and knowing that half of the people you dealt with during arbitration now hate you. No place is better to share wisdom gleaned painstakingly from experience. Experience: the comb that life gives you after you lose your hair.

Dallas. Legendary Mayor Erik Jonsson was honored with dinner and Dallas/AIA's prestigious George F. Harrell Award. Mayor Jonsson, 87, laughed in all the right places and followed my introduction with a marvelous 20-minute response. He later said, "I didn't hear three-fourths of what you said, but I did a good job faking it, didn't I?"

College Station. I joined the Rowlett Lectures at Texas A&M University, which are sponsored by CRSS to honor the late John Rowlett. No one knew it would be the last time for most of us to be with Wallie Scott, the S in CRS. Wallie: good guy, good friend, good architect, a lover of the big band music of the '40s. Those of us who were fortunate enough to know him will never hear a Benny Goodman or Glen Miller number without remembering him.

Lubbock. I joined the mavens of the Texas Tech University College of Architecture at their annual Awards Day Convocation. The program was held out-of-doors, and I was not at my best (as the students will vouch, I am sure). It has been my fate to speak in most of the high school lunch rooms in Texas, as well as on street corners, in back yards, auditoriums, council chambers, and gymnasiums, once in a football stadium in the flight path of D/FW Airport, and in magnificent ballrooms of major hotels in America, including a white-tie Mafia banquet (black shirt/white tie) at the New York Hilton; but until this recent soirée in Lubbock, I had never spoken directly from the vortex of a West Texas dust devil!

Arlington. The UTA School of Architecture recently held a reception at the opening of a retrospective of the work of Bill Booziotis, FAIA, and Downing Thomas, FAIA. No speeches, just wine, cheese, and visions of their excellent architectural gifts, beautifully matted and hung.

I went away wondering: if they held a retrospective for me, would they tack words up on the wall? I believe it was George Gobel who said, "Edison did not invent the first talking machine. He invented the first one that could be turned off."

A great closing line!

Contributing Editor David Braden, FAIA, is principal of the Dallas firm Dahl/Braden/PTM, Inc.

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